

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY IN THE NATIONAL PARKS

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Hampton National Historic Site

Parks identified as having cultural and natural resources of traditional significance to African Americans fall into several categories: those associated with important historical figures; those associated with the institution of slavery or the movement to abolish slavery; those forts and battlefields associated with African-American soldiers; and those associated with traditional African-American communities.

Parks Associated with African-American Communities

Amistad NRA, TX—Descendants of Black Seminole Indians live in the area, and a former post where scouts were assigned lies under the reservoir.

Boston African-American NHS, MA—This unit marks the site of one of largest antebellum communities of free African Americans in North America which existed through 1890s (there are still nearby neighborhoods which are largely African American).

Cane River Creole NHP & National Heritage Area, LA (newly established)—Cultural resources in this area of northwest Louisiana are of possible significance to the Caddo of Oklahoma, the Clifton Choctaw/Appalachee, the Tunica Biloxi, and descendants of the communities of Creoles of color (for example, at Isle Brevelle).

Castillo de San Marcos NM FL—This park has an exhibit on free blacks living under Spanish rule. Slaves fleeing from Georgia and the Carolinas could find refuge with the Spaniards who built and manned this fort; Fort Mose, now an archeological site, was set up near St. Augustine for escaped slaves by the Spanish in 1738 and included a community of about 100 free African Americans.

Colonial NHP, VA—Yorktown was an important port of entry for enslaved Africans arriving in Virginia before 1750. A group of indentured Africans arrived at Hampton or Jamestown in 1619, an act symbolic for contemporary African Americans.

Cumberland Island NS, GA—The north end of the island was settled by freed slaves; Half Moon Bluff includes cemeteries where former slaves were buried and buildings from 1930s–1950s. Elsewhere on the island are remains of plantations (Stafford has remains of slave cabins), so the island shows the continuity of the African-American community from slavery through the 20th century.

Everglades NP, & Big Cypress NP, FL—Seminoles harbored and integrated fugitive slaves into their society for over 100 years; such help led to the Seminole Wars.

Fire Island NS, NY—The Floyd family, owners of the William Floyd Estate at the seashore, had a 250-year relationship with Poospatuk Indians who intermarried with local blacks; the Floyds also owned slaves before the Civil War and some were buried in a segregated cemetery at the park.

Fort Scott NHS, KS—The First Kansas Colored, the first black regiment to see combat in the Civil War, was mustered here; fleeing Indians brought black slaves to the fort, and the town still has a black community.

Hopewell Furnace NHS, PA—Built by African-American slaves in 1770, freedmen continued to work and live in the area, supporting the Underground Railroad.

Hot Springs NP, AR—As park exhibits show, many of the workers at the bathhouses were African American, and segregation meant two sets of resort and bathing facilities.

Independence NHP, PA—The Constitution did not resolve the slavery issue, but incorporated provisions legitimizing continuing

enslavement of African Americans. In the park area lived several well-known African Americans of the Colonial era.

Jean Lafitte NHP&Pres, LA—New Orleans has multiple significance for African Americans: the development of jazz; Creoles of color; participation of free men of color in the battle at Chalmette and burial of African Americans in the national cemetery; an African-American community was located on the site of the battlefield through the 1960s.

Jimmy Carter NHS, GA—Enabling legislation refers to all the people of Plains, of whom 60% are African Americans.

Maggie L. Walker NHS, VA—The neighborhood around the Maggie Walker site is a Historic District, Jackson Ward, long associated with African Americans.

Manassas NBP, VA—The ongoing African-American community in Manassas and in Prince William County dates from the antebellum period. NPS archeologists have conducted excavations producing evidence of the slaves who lived (1820–1861) on the John Cundiff wheat-producing plantation and at the Lewis Farm (also called Folly Castle and Brownsville), and evidence of the homes of freedmen (e.g., “Gentleman Jim” Robinson).

Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS, GA—This site is located in a designated Historic District, an important African-American neighborhood in Atlanta called “Sweet Auburn”.

Natchez NHP, MS—The enabling legislation specifies attention to the experience of all peoples of Natchez, a notable slave-holding region in the antebellum period. The park includes the William Johnson House, the home of a freedman whose diary chronicles pre-Civil War African-American life.

National Capital Field Area—Sites include the Lincoln Memorial (“I have a dream” speech, Marian

Anderson's concert); Lincoln and Mary McLeod Bethune statues; etc.

New Orleans Jazz NHP, LA (newly established)—This park was created to foster preservation, education, and interpretation of jazz as it evolved in New Orleans.

New River Gorge NR, WV—As was common in West Virginia at the turn of the century, Kay Moor miners included African Americans, usually recruited from out-of-state.

Nicodemus, KS (proposed)—This town in Kansas, settled by African-American homesteaders, still has about 40 permanent residents and hosts an annual homecoming for former residents, descendants of settlers, and others interested in the town's history and resources.

Prince William Forest Park, VA—The area incorporated into this park included African-American communities dating between 1650–1942, and park neighbors include contemporary African-American communities. Camps for city children set up after establishment of the park were segregated, despite national NPS policy.

San Francisco Maritime NHP—Many black seamen were associated with sea trade, especially whalers.

Virgin Islands NP, VI—The park covers part of St. John's Island, which had been used for 250 years for sugar plantations and slash-and-burn subsistence agriculture for African-American workers. Local African Americans continue to use beaches and fish.

Slavery or Abolition Movement

Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Mem, VA—Arlington House was a plantation owned by the Custis family, although Robert E. Lee did not believe in slavery, and himself did not own any slaves. After the war, part of the plantation served as a Freedman's Village.

Big Thicket NP, TX—Reputedly a hiding place for fugitive slaves.

Booker T. Washington NM, VA—Booker T. Washington was born a slave on a small plantation (only 10 slaves) in the Blue Ridge Mountains where his mother was the cook and where he lived in the slave quarters until 1865.

Boston African-American NHS, MA—The antebellum community of free African Americans included activists working for abolition of slavery and civil rights.

Charles Pinckney NHS, SC—The park will interpret the economic and political implications of the institution of slavery because Snee Farm was formerly a plantation and contains remains of slave cabins.

Congaree Swamp NM, SC—The swamp is said to be the hiding place of slaves, likely as it was located near several plantations, and contains slave-built dikes and cattle mounts.

Frederick Douglass NHS, DC—Although Cedar Hill in Anacostia was the home of Douglass only between 1877–1895, Douglass was a famous abolitionist before he lived there—lecturer about his experiences as a slave in Maryland, author of two pre-Civil War autobiographies, and editor of the *North Star* in Rochester.

George Washington Birthplace NM, VA—There is an exhibit on the life of slaves living here who were owned by Washington's family.

Hampton NHS, MD—The mansion was part of a 2000-acre estate which maintained over 200 slaves and was built by Charles Ridgely in 1790.

Harpers Ferry NHP, WV—Here took place the famous raid by abolitionist John Brown. There are exhibits on the history of African-American residents of the town and on Storer College. Storer College was an African-American co-educational college, one of the first after the Civil War, and was the site of a meeting of the Niagara Movement led by W. E. B. Du Bois,

essential to the formation of the NAACP.

Hopewell Furnace NHS, PA (see above)

Independence NHP, PA—The Constitution did not resolve the slavery issue, but incorporated provisions legitimizing continuing enslavement of African Americans. The Christiana Trials were held here. The Liberty Bell became so named because of its association with the abolitionists.

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, MO—Slave auctions were held here. At the Old Courthouse were conducted the first two trials (1847, 1850) leading to the Dred Scott Supreme Court case, related to a slave's emancipation on the basis of residence in free territory. Dred Scott's direct descendants still live in St. Louis and other parts of the Midwest.

Lowell NHP, MA—There's a clear link between northern mills like those in Lowell and southern cotton grown by slaves. Also, Lowell was the site of abolitionist meetings.

Salem Maritime NHS, MA—Salem was home of one of the few integrated abolitionist women's organizations and depended until the mid-19th century on shipping, including with the West Indies (site of slave plantations and source of sugar for New England rum). There were many African-American merchant seamen during the period interpreted at this site.

Thomas Stone NHS, MD—Habre de Venture, located in southern Maryland, grew tobacco and had enslaved laborers in the 18th and 19th centuries; the "tenant house" (1850–59) may have served as a slave quarters, and the park may include a slave burial ground.

Timucuan Ecological & Historic Reserve, FL—One of this park's three units is Kingsley Plantation, a sea island plantation named for Zephaniah Kingsley who ran it from 1813–1839. One of the unit's challenges is interpreting slavery.

Trail of Tears NHT, NM—Some Cherokees who were forcibly removed from their homes in North Carolina took along enslaved African Americans, and so fared better because of the help received.

Women's Rights NHP, NY—The activists for women's rights at the Seneca Falls meeting were also active in the abolition movement.

Notable African Americans

Booker T. Washington NM (see above)

Frederick Douglass NHS (see above)

Maggie L. Walker NHS (see above)

Martin Luther King, Jr NHS (see above)

Dayton Aviation Heritage NHP, OH—The life and works of Paul Laurence Dunbar, a close friend of the Wright Brothers, will be a park theme.

George Washington Carver NM, MO—This was the first park dedicated to commemoration of a major African American, the famous scientist and educator. George Washington Carver was born a slave on this plantation, and was brought up by the owners.

Mammoth Cave NP, KY—Stephen Bishop, a slave belonging to the owner of the cave who opened it for tours, was one of the original guides and explorers of the cave.

Mary McLeod Bethune Council House NHS, DC—This was the Washington residence of the famous educator, civil rights activist, federal official, and founder of the National Council of Negro Women and Bethune-Cookman College.

Santa Fe NHT, NM—The trail was used by African-American mountain men such as Jim Beckwourth.

Tuskegee Institute NHS, AL—This institution is associated with George Washington Carver, famous for his agricultural research and teaching, as well as its founder and first president, Booker T. Washing-

ton (includes Booker T.'s home, "The Oaks" and Carver Museum).

African-American Military

Andersonville NHS, GA—The prison population included many African Americans. The Confederacy threat to sell black POWs into slavery and to execute their white officers ended prisoner exchanges and the use of prison camps.

Antietam NB, MD—The battle included black troops and was related to issuing the Emancipation Proclamation.

Big Bend NP, TX—Neville Spring Cavalry Outpost was an outpost of Fort Davis, staffed with Seminole Negro Indian scouts and occupied during 1885–1891.

Chiricahua NM, AZ—A Buffalo Soldier Camp has been excavated and documented within the park at Bonita Cañon.

Colonial NHP, VA—Blacks from Rhode Island participated at Yorktown, although Virginia denied free or enslaved African Americans the right to enlist in local military forces.

Fort Bowie NHS, AZ—Black military units encamped and built a stone memorial to President Garfield.

Fort Davis NHS, TX—During 1867–1885, Buffalo Soldiers (9th and 10th U.S. Cavalry and 24th and 25th U.S. Infantry) were garrisoned here while involved in struggles with Apaches and Comanches.

Fort Frederica NM, GA—Although commemorating a fort built in 1736 by Oglethorpe, this park is located on St. Simons Island, the home of a historic Gullah population. Fugitive slaves from South Carolina played a part in precipitating the War of Jenkins' Ear and there was a 1741 offensive by the Spanish (including Fort Mose Blacks) against the fort.

Fort Laramie NHS, WY—Fort Laramie was a major site on the route through which passed African Americans such as the Cal-

ifornia gold miner Alvin Coffey, Washington State farmers George Bush and George Washington (founder of Centralia), and the Mormon guide named Green Flake. Mormon pioneers used the fort too, when travelling along the Mormon Trail.

Fort Larned NHS, KS—This fort was used during the period of the Indian Wars (1867–69) by Company A, 10th Cavalry, Buffalo Soldiers.

Fort McHenry NM and HS, MD—A battalion of 200 black "colonial marines" recruited from fugitive slaves during the British invasion of the Chesapeake Bay fought here because of an offer of freedom.

Fort Scott NHS, KS—The right to bear arms against the Confederate army was considered a part of emancipation. The First Kansas Colored, the first black regiment to see combat in the Civil War, was mustered here.

Fort Smith NHS, AR—There were blacks among the Cherokees and Creeks who resettled the area, which, during the Civil War, was headquarters for units of U.S. Colored Troops and the Union Indian Brigade (which included black Indians).

Fort Sumter NM, SC—It was near here that the famous African-American regiment, the 54th Massachusetts under Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, made its heroic attack. Sullivan's Island (Fort Moultrie) was the port of entry for as many as 40% of the African slaves brought to America.

Horseshoe Bend NMP, AL—African Americans participated on the side of the Creeks in the war (if not at this battle), and fugitive slaves were a precipitating issue for the Creek War.

Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, OH—Perhaps one quarter of the sailors were African American (both free and enslaved) and acquitted themselves heroically.



Petersburg NB, VA—Here was fought the Battle of the Crater, where black soldiers suffered terrible losses. The city had a large antebellum free black population. At City Point unit, the 1864–65 Union occupiers and civilian workforce were largely African American.

Port Chicago Naval Magazine NMem, CA—This affiliated area was a naval ammunition base, site of the largest explosion within the U.S. during World War II. The explosion caused 320 men to die (of whom 202 were African American) and destroyed 2 cargo ships. As a result, there was a mutiny of ammunition loaders who were afraid unsafe conditions would lead to another disaster.

Presidio (Addition to Golden Gate)—Black units stationed here during early-20th century who journeyed to Sequoia-Kings Canyon NP in summer and has museum exhibits in U.S. forces through the years.

Richmond NBP, VA—General Benjamin Butler, believing the war was about black freedom, did not hesitate to use regiments of U.S. Colored Troops in the Battle of Claf-flin's Farm to show their effectiveness.

Sequoia NP, CA—Captain Charles Young, Ninth Cavalry, was the first African-American park superinten-

dent (of Sequoia and General Grant parks) and was responsible for road construction to develop the park for tourism and for recommendation of acquisition of patented lands in the park. At the time of his appointment as superintendent in 1903, he was the only active commissioned African-American graduate of West Point.

Tuskegee Institute NHS, AL—Associated are the Tuskegee Airmen (including Coleman Young, Percy Sutton, and Daniel "Chap-pie" James), African-American pilots during WWII who had to struggle for de-segregation of bases and the right to enter combat.

Valley Forge NHP, PA—In 1993, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority erected a statue commemorating the role of the African-American soldier at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777–78.

Vicksburg NMP, MS—17,869 out of 186,000 servicemen in army and naval units of both sides during the Civil War were African Americans from Mississippi; for example, at Milliken's Bend and Port Hudson in 1863 blacks engaged in the battles.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial, DC—The Wall commemorates all the dead of the Vietnam War, including African Americans.

Yosemite NP, CA—The park was guarded by Buffalo Soldiers for a year.

The Civil Rights Movement

Brown vs. Board of Education NHS, KS—This new unit commemorates the Supreme Court decision to de-segregate U.S. schools.

Castillo de San Marcos NM, FL—Civil rights activists held rallies on park grounds in 1964.

Harry S Truman NHS, MO—This president integrated U.S. military forces and the U.S. civil service.

Selma to Montgomery Trail, Alabama (Proposed)—This proposed historic trail would commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s march in 1965, and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

Key

NB	National Battlefield
NBP	National Battlefield Park
NHP	National Historical Park
NHPres	National Historic Preserve
NHS	National Historic Site
NHT	National Historic Trail
NMem	National Memorial
NMP	National Military Park
NM	National Monument
NP	National Park
NPres	National Preserve
NRA	National Recreation Area
NR	National River
NS	National Seashore



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VOLUME 19 • NO. 2
Cultural Resources
Washington, DC